



Get Your Cholesterol Checked

Elevated cholesterol has no warning signs, yet it can increase your risk of heart disease and stroke. High cholesterol levels may also multiply the impact of other risk factors you have.

What is cholesterol?

A soft, waxy fat, or “lipid,” cholesterol is found in the blood stream. Cholesterol is naturally created and used by our bodies. Cholesterol also enters the body through the foods we eat.

Cholesterol is transferred to and from cells by lipoproteins. Low-density lipoprotein (LDL) takes cholesterol to your tissues where it is stored. LDL can cause plaque build-up—“hardening” of the arteries. The narrowing of blood flow due to plaque can lead to a clot or a blockage, causing a heart attack or stroke. High-density lipoprotein (HDL) transports cholesterol away from the tissues to the liver to be filtered out of the body. If your HDL level is low, you may have a greater risk. “Total” or “serum” cholesterol is the measure of LDL and HDL and triglycerides.

13% of U.S. adults 20 years of age or older have high serum total cholesterol.

Take control of your health and ask your doctor to test your blood cholesterol levels. After receiving your test results, use the table below to determine your risk:

	Desirable	Borderline	Risky	Very Risky
TOTAL	Under 200 mg/dL	200-239 mg/dL	240 mg/dL and above	
LDL	Under 100 mg/dL	130-159 mg/dL	160-189 mg/dL	190 mg/dL or more
HDL	60 mg/dL or more		Less than 40 mg/dL	

Your cholesterol levels may be increased by:

- Lack of exercise
- Family history; genetic predisposition
- Excess body weight
- Foods high in saturated fat
- Foods high in cholesterol

www.strokeassociation.org | www.stroke.org | www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/cholest.htm

Know the signs of stroke and call 9-1-1 for the fastest access to the Stroke System of Care for North Dakota.